

E GULL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GOLDEN GATE AUDUBON SOCIETY



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UC Berkeley students from Pi Kappa Phi at the Alameda Wildlife Refuge. Thanks to the efforts of these and other volunteers, the refuge is ready for the return of breeding Least Terns in spring.

VA Development Threatens Alameda Wildlife Refuge

Golden Gate Audubon's Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge (FAWR) committee enjoyed another successful winter maintaining the California Least Tern colony at the former Alameda Naval Air Station. Volunteers of all ages prepared for the return of the terns, expected in April. This season, volunteers contributed 323 hours from September 2007 through February 2008 by pulling weeds and getting the refuge ready for the nesting season.

The Alameda refuge draws volunteers who want to experience firsthand this unique wildlife habitat, which is normally closed to the public. The refuge inspires people as few places can locally: it is a place of obvious value for the terns and a place of potential that captures the imagination. Leora Feeney, chair of FAWR, expresses that sentiment when she says, "Alameda's refuge gives young people a place to invest their hope." Protecting and restoring the refuge are an investment not only in wildlife protection, but in the hopes and dreams of community members who deserve open space and wildlife experiences.

Least Terns are the smallest member of the gull family. The California Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum browni*) is one of three subspecies, all of which are listed as endangered and are protected under the Endangered Species Act. Alameda Point is

ALAMEDA WILDLIFE REFUGE continued on page 12

Celebrate Earth Day with GGA

For nearly 40 years, people around the world have been observing Earth Day in a variety of ways intended to inspire awareness of and appreciation for our environment. The global observance of Earth Day in many countries is held annually on April 22. Golden Gate Audubon will celebrate Earth Day on Saturday, April 19, with a special workday at Pier 94 on San Francisco's southern waterfront—and you are invited.

Golden Gate Audubon's cleanup efforts at Pier 94 began on Earth Day in 2002. Since then, more than 150 volunteers have hauled away over a half ton of scrap metal, several truckloads of star thistle, and hundreds of old tires. With the help of our dedicated members and volunteers, we are gradually changing the landscape and creating valuable habitat for birds, fish, and tidal marsh plants.

Native salt marsh has already formed along this small part of the San Francisco Bay shoreline and is beginning to attract sandpipers, herons, terns, Snowy Egrets, Willets, Killdeer, Black Oystercatchers, and American Avocets. Located in the shadow of container ships and heavy equipment, the restored salt marsh and adjacent upland is home to many native and non-native plants. New "pups" of endangered California Sea-Blite (*Suaeda californica*) were found during a monitoring session in February.

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The Golden Gate Audubon Society was founded January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948. Golden Gate Audubon Society Supporting Membership is \$25 per year. Renewals should be sent to the Golden Gate Audubon office. The board of directors meets the last Monday of every month (except August and December) at 7:30 p.m. in the chapter office in Berkeley.

The Gull is published nine times per year by the Golden Gate Audubon Society. The deadline for submissions is five weeks prior to the month of publication. Special third-class postage paid in Oakland, CA. Send address changes to office promptly. The post office does not forward The Gull.

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Design and layout e.g. communications

New Staff Bolsters GGA Programs

Over the past few years, Golden Gate Audubon has experienced tremendous and exciting growth. We have significantly expanded our restoration projects, initiated new bird census efforts, and launched several ambitious conservation advocacy campaigns. We have also expanded our education programs, class offerings, and volunteer programs.

Each of these developments helps us better execute our mission, as we seek to connect Bay Area people with the natural world and engage them in protecting the wildlife that share our home. This growth also brings a need to increase our financial resources and to run our organization yet more efficiently and effectively.

To support these changes, Golden Gate Audubon has hired Kevin E. Consey to serve as part-time director of administration and finance. Kevin, who began his work at Golden Gate Audubon in February 2008, is responsible for the strategic and daily operations regarding accounting, finances, and investment security, and will play a leading role in our fundraising efforts and overall office operations.

Kevin has been an enthusiastic birder since 1975 and has traveled frequently on birding trips to North, Central, and South America, Australia, and New Zealand. He has been a volunteer and a board member for environmental organizations since 2001, including serving on Golden Gate Audubon's board for five years.

An expert in nonprofit management and leadership, Kevin earned an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in art history from the University of Virginia and University of Michigan. He has taught leadership, finance, and management courses at the graduate schools of the University of Zurich and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and at local colleges and universities.

Kevin retired as director of the University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive in January 2008, after more than 30 years as an art museum director and eight years at UC Berkeley. He was born in New York City and held positions at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum of Art, the National Gallery of Art, the Newport Harbor Art Museum, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, before working at UC Berkeley. He lives with his wife, Susan, a vice president of Morgan Stanley, in Berkeley.

We are delighted to have Kevin as a member of our staff.

—Elizabeth Murdock, Executive Director



Kevin Consey, Golden Gate Audubon's new director of administration and finance.

Ben Blackwell

Earth Stroll

If you are unable to join Golden Gate Audubon's Earth Day celebration at Pier 94 (see page 1), you can still mark Earth Day by bringing the whole family to the Crissy Field Earth Stroll in San Francisco on Saturday, April 19, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Activities for adults and children include playing eco-games, visiting with live animals, taking an interactive fitness walk around Crissy Field, and boosting your nature knowledge at the many activity stations designed to help you connect with this part of our planet. Golden Gate Audubon will have a booth at the Earth Stroll. If you are interested in helping out at our booth and playing the Shorebird Maze with families, please contact Jennifer Robinson, Golden Gate Audubon's volunteer coordinator, at jrobinson@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.919.5873.



CONSERVATION CORNER

TERNWATCH GEARS UP FOR NESTING SEASON

Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge is seeking volunteers to monitor the colony of nesting California Least Terns during the breeding season and help detect predators or conditions that put the birds at risk. Volunteers are required to take a two-hour training session offered in April. Schedules for monitoring will be available by May.

After the training, Ternwatch participants will come to the Alameda Wildlife Refuge to observe activity at the tern colony and report the presence of predators and any other problems that may cause breeding failure. The Alameda Wildlife Refuge is not open to the public, so becoming a Ternwatch volunteer offers a unique opportunity to visit the refuge and observe this endangered species. Last year's Ternwatch, the first held at the refuge, was very successful (for details see the cover story in the November 2007 *Gull*).

If you are interested, please contact Leora Feeney from Friends of the Alameda Wildlife Refuge at leoraalameda@att.net.

SAN FRANCISCO PARKS BOND MEASURE PASSES

In February, San Francisco voters approved the Measure A Parks Bond with 72 percent of the vote. The \$185 million bond provides funding for capital improvement projects in the parks and for the Port of San Francisco. Golden Gate Audubon endorsed the bond measure because of commitments by the Port of San Francisco to improve shoreline habitats and because of \$5 million earmarked for Natural Areas Program (NAP) projects around the city.

Natural areas, which make up 27 percent of the city's parks, are the remnants of the city's historical habitats, such as oak woodlands, grasslands, scrub, and dunes. The wide variety of birds and other wildlife that live in or pass through the city rely on these critical habitats. Natural areas provide a haven not just for plants and wildlife—including 12 endangered species—but for all of us who enjoy the outdoors. You can learn

more about the NAP at <http://sfnap.org>. Approval of the parks bond was a great victory for our San Francisco natural areas, which make up about 1,100 acres of land and water. However, the NAP struggles with just six gardeners—a meager 2 percent of the overall gardening staff for city parks—and with only 1 percent of the parks budget.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Contact Mayor Gavin Newsom and the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission to express your support for the Natural Areas Program. Ask them to increase the gardening staff and budget for NAP so that we can protect San Francisco's natural heritage.

Contact Mayor Gavin Newsom at City Hall – Room 200, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102; 415.554.6141, 415.554.6160 (fax); gavin.newsom@sfgov.org.

Contact the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission at 501 Stanyan Street, San Francisco, CA 94117; 415.831.2750, 415.221.8034; recpark.commission@sfgov.org.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO JOHN JAMES AUDUBON

No need to bring a present—instead, celebrate Audubon's birthday with Golden Gate Audubon on Saturday, April 26, 9 a.m. to noon, with our Save the Quail habitat restoration workday at Harding Park in San Francisco. John James Audubon (1785–1851) was not the first person to attempt to paint and describe all the birds of America (Alexander Wilson has that distinction), but for a half century he was the young country's dominant wildlife artist. His seminal *Birds of America*, a collection of 435 life-size prints, quickly eclipsed Wilson's work and has long been a touchstone for wildlife artists.

Audubon had a deep appreciation and concern for conservation; in his later writings he sounded the alarm about destruction of birds and habitats. It is fitting that we carry his name and legacy into the future. Help us further our work in conserving California Quail and migratory bird habitat



Noreen Weeden/www.naturetrip.com

High school students restoring habitat at Harding Park, San Francisco.

at Harding Park in San Francisco. For this workday, meet at the parking lot at the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Lake Merced Boulevard.

For more information or detailed directions, please contact Jennifer Robinson, Golden Gate Audubon volunteer coordinator, at jrobinson@goldengateaudubon.org.

BE A VOLUNTEER HOST AT AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

Every year, from spring through midsummer, thousands of visitors come to see the herons and egrets nesting at Bolinas Preserve at Audubon Canyon Ranch (ACR) in western Marin. During the 2007 public season, more than 6,500 people toured the thousand-acre sanctuary. Golden Gate Audubon, which helped establish the ranch in the early 1960s, provides some of the hosts who greet and direct visitors and answer questions. Becoming a host is a great way to support the ranch and also provides an opportunity to see the nesting herons and egrets in the preserve's Picher Canyon.

Hosts are needed for the following dates: April 12 and 13; May 17 and 18; May 26 (Memorial Day); June 14; and July 5 and 6. ACR provides all the information you need to serve as host. Hosts arrive by 9 a.m. and work until about 4:30 p.m., with a lunch break. For more information and to sign up, contact Anna-Marie Bratton at annamariobb@earthlink.net.

Golden Gate Audubon Determined to Protect Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline

Winter rains have filled the seasonal ponds at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline in Oakland. Hundreds of waterfowl and shorebirds are drawn to the ponds, seeking out one of Oakland's few wildlife refuges. In February, as American Avocets were changing into their brilliant breeding plumage, Golden Gate Audubon volunteers joined the East Bay Regional Park District to clear stinkwort from a rocky island in the enclosed 72-acre restored wetlands and improve the odds of nesting success for breeding birds.

Sadly, just across the park fence line, construction is under way by Swan Terminal for a trucking terminal that will service Roadway Express shipping. Golden Gate Audubon is continuing to fight this damaging project, which will diminish the quality of the park for both wildlife and visitors.

In the fall of 2007, Golden Gate Audubon filed a lawsuit against the Port of Oakland and developer Swan Terminal for failure to perform adequate environmental review of the project's impacts on the MLK Regional Shoreline under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Despite an existing consent decree that prohibits the Port of Oakland from approving development adjacent to the park's seasonal ponds

and restored wetlands that could harm wildlife, the Board of Port Commissioners rejected Golden Gate Audubon's appeal of the trucking terminal permit. There are also plans to create a second trucking terminal next to the Swan Terminal location on the area now used as an airport parking lot. The cumulative impacts of light and noise from two 24-hour trucking terminals, along with air pollution and runoff to the wetlands, will pose a threat to a habitat that cost the Port of Oakland \$2.5 million to restore—and has now become one of the most important shorebird habitats in the Central Bay.

Golden Gate Audubon is currently working to compel the Port of Oakland to complete a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR) under CEQA because the port failed to assess the impacts on the park's seasonal ponds and wetlands. We are also engaged in negotiations to find measures that will minimize the impact of the trucking terminal on wildlife and visitors. Golden Gate Audubon supports low-impact development in the area that brings businesses and jobs without unnecessary environmental impacts.

Golden Gate Audubon will continue to oppose development adjacent to the MLK

Regional Shoreline that harms wildlife and diminishes the park experience for visitors, including the approximately 3,000 East Oakland community members who participate in our Eco-Oakland Education Program. The endangered California Clapper Rail, the endangered Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse, and other wildlife that use this area deserve protection. With roughly 10 percent of San Francisco Bay's historic wetlands remaining, it is crucial to defend important wetland habitats such as the MLK Regional Shoreline.

—Eli Saddler, Conservation Director

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Contact the Port of Oakland commissioners and tell them that you do not want trucking terminals next to important wildlife habitat and adjacent to one of East Oakland's few community open spaces. Ask the port to live up to its commitments to protect the environment by approving only those developments adjacent to the MLK Regional Shoreline that do not harm wildlife or bring pollution to East Oakland. Contact the Board of Port Commissioners at Port of Oakland, 530 Water Street, Oakland, CA 94607; 510.627.1100; board@portoakland.com.

CELEBRATE EARTH DAY from page 1

To make sure that all of our native plants thrive, we need your help in removing invasive weeds and clearing out debris accumulated from the winter storms.

Meet us on Saturday, April 19, at 11 a.m. at Pier 94. We'll finish at 3 p.m. There will be more to enjoy in addition to the satisfaction of helping this native salt marsh thrive. We'll take a lunch break (refreshments provided) and go on a bird walk (bring your binoculars!) to see the many birds that now feed and roost at Pier 94. For more information and directions to the site, please contact Jennifer Robinson, Golden Gate Audubon volunteer coordinator, at jrobinson@goldengateaudubon.org.



Volunteers at Pier 94, San Francisco.

Lee Karney



SPEAKER SERIES

SARAH REED

COORDINATOR

Talks in the Speaker Series begin at 7:30 p.m.

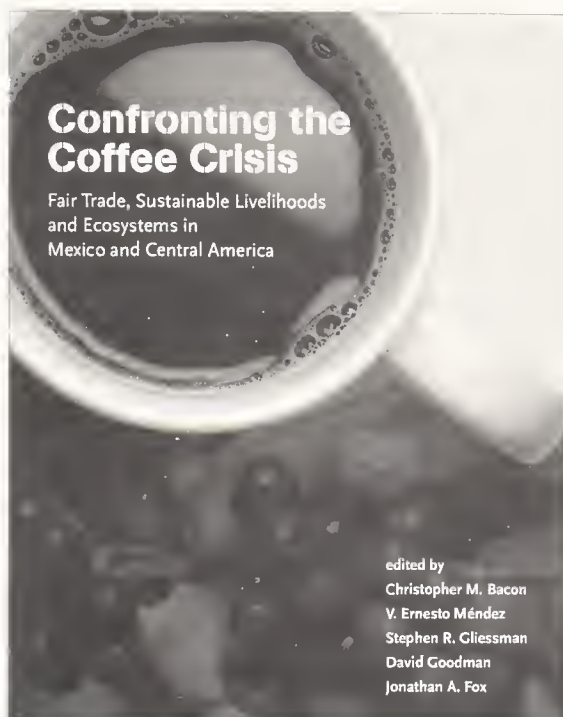
Birdsong and Coffee: A Wake-up Call

Christopher Bacon

Berkeley: Thursday, April 17

Whether or not you drink one or more of the 2.5 billion cups of coffee consumed each day, you will be astonished to learn about how the coffee in our cups connects to farm families, shade trees, and birds around the world. Addressing the relationship between birds, trees, and people, Christopher Bacon's program will start with a documentary film, *Bird Song and Coffee: A Wake-up Call*. In the film, we'll hear from experts and students, from coffee lovers and bird-watchers, and—most importantly—from coffee farmers themselves. After the short film, Christopher will share research that clarifies the politics of sustainable coffee. His presentation also will include a short reading from the book *Confronting the Coffee Crisis: Fair Trade, Sustainable Livelihoods and Ecosystems in Mexico and Central America*. By the end of the evening, you'll gain an enhanced understanding of how our lives and those of coffee farmers are inextricably linked, both economically and environmentally.

Christopher M. Bacon is a lecturer in the sociology department and a researcher and instructor affiliated with the Agroecology Group and the Latin American and Latino studies department at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He is a co-editor of *Confronting the Coffee Crisis*, published by MIT Press.



Response to the Cosco Busan Oil Spill in San Francisco Bay

Dr. Greg Massey, Megan Shaw Prelinger, Noreen Weeden

San Francisco: Tuesday, April 22

On the morning of November 7, 2007, more than 58,000 gallons of heavy bunker oil gushed into San Francisco Bay after the *Cosco Busan*, a 900-foot container ship, crashed into the towers of the San Francisco–Oakland Bay Bridge. As the oil spread throughout the bay and out to sea, it fouled hundreds of acres of shoreline habitats and endangered thousands of birds and other wildlife species. Volunteers and staff from Golden Gate Audubon, International Bird

Rescue Research Center, Oiled Wildlife Care Network, and many other organizations quickly responded with plans to survey shorelines, rescue oiled birds, and rehabilitate and release them. This panel will discuss how Bay Area species and habitats were affected by the oil spill and how organizations and volunteers responded to the crisis. Participants will also identify lessons that we can learn from the oil spill and its impacts.

Dr. Greg Massey, who has a veterinary degree from North Carolina State University, joined the Oiled Wildlife Care Network (OWCN) in Davis, California, in 2003. Currently holding the position of assistant director, he is largely responsible for coordinating the readiness of the OWCN's oiled animal care throughout California. Greg was in charge of the OWCN Care and Processing Group during the *Cosco Busan* oil spill response. He led the initial reconnaissance efforts on San Francisco Bay and supervised the care of oiled birds at the San Francisco Bay Oiled Wildlife Care and Education Center. He previously worked as the endangered species veterinarian for the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources and coordinated Hawaii's Oiled Wildlife Response Program.

Megan Shaw Prelinger is a wildlife rehabilitator and naturalist specializing in aquatic birds and oil spill response. She is a member of the emergency response team at the International Bird Rescue Research Center in Cordelia, California. Megan was coleader of the Conditioning Unit of the Wildlife Response Unit following the *Cosco Busan* oil spill. The unit is responsible for shepherding each bird from the point when its oil has been removed to the time when it can be released. This multistage process involves rewaterproofing the birds through swim therapy and reacclimating them to a cold water environment.

Noreen Weeden is chair of Golden Gate Audubon's San Francisco Conservation Committee. During the oil spill crisis, Noreen worked with GGA staff, as well as other agencies, to organize volunteers by developing procedures for monitoring and reporting observations of oiled birds, coordinating the locations for monitoring, and assisting in the transit of oiled birds from San Francisco to the Oiled Wildlife Care Network trailer in Berkeley or the International Bird Rescue and Research Center in Cordelia. Noreen also participated in oil spill follow-up meetings for Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Lessons Learned with environmental and conservation organizations.

Berkeley: Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda (between Solano and Marin).

Directions: www.northbrae.org/directions.htm

San Francisco: County Fair Building, SF Botanical Garden, Golden Gate Park, 9th Avenue at Lincoln Way.

Directions: www.sfbotanicalgarden.org/visiting/page2.html



FIELD TRIPS

PAM BELCHAMBER, COORDINATOR

For questions about individual field trips, contact the leaders. If you cannot reach a leader, contact Pam Belchamber at 510.549.2839. Field trips are also listed on the Golden Gate Audubon website at www.goldengateaudubon.org.

Jewel Lake in Tilden Regional Park

Berkeley

Friday, April 4, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

Phila Rogers, 510.848.9156,
philajane6@yahoo.com

Meet at parking lot at north end of Central Park Dr. for a 1-mile stroll through this lush riparian area. Early spring is a time of transition, with some early migrants in residence and breeding birds beginning to sing. Willows and flowering currant should be in bloom. Come prepared for muddy paths. Heavy rain cancels. Mark your calendar for future first Friday of the month for walks at Jewel Lake.

San Francisco Botanical Garden

Saturday, April 5, 10 a.m. – noon

Angie Geiger and Nancy DeStefanis, SF Nature Education; Darin Dawson, SF Botanical Garden docent, 415.387.9160, www.sfnature.org

Meet at front gate of garden in Golden Gate Park, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way. Families welcome. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Cosponsored by Botanical Garden, SF Nature Education, and Golden Gate Audubon.

San Francisco Botanical Garden

Sunday, April 6, 8 – 10:30 a.m.

Alan Ridley, allanrid@pacbell.net; Helen McKenna, 415.566.3241; Ginny Marshall, 650.349.3780

Meet at front gate of garden in Golden Gate Park, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way. This delightful section of the park has several micro-habitats that attract an array of resident, migrant, and vagrant birds. This monthly trip is oriented toward helping beginning birders develop their skills in spotting and identifying birds.

Albany Mudflats

Albany

Sunday, April 6, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Oliver James, 510.524.7093,
oliverjames91@gmail.com

Meet at raised platform located on access road to Albany Bulb in the East-shore State Park. Park along the road at westernmost end of Buchanan St. on west side of I-80. We'll scan the mudflats and bulb for a mix of water and land species. Bring scope if you have one.

Redwood Regional Park

Oakland

Sunday, April 6, 8:30 a.m. – noon

Denise Wight, 925.377.0951,
blkittiwake@yahoo.com

Focus of this trip is birding by ear. We should hear singing Winter Wrens, Black-headed Grosbeak, various sparrows, Brown Creepers, and other breeding birds.

Go east on I-580 and exit at Redwood Rd. Turn left over freeway and go up Redwood Rd. 2.5 miles beyond Skyline Blvd. to the Redwood Gate entrance near Redwood Rd. and Pinehurst Rd. Meet at the Canyon Meadow in the farthest parking lot at the end of the road. \$

\$ Entrance fee

 Biking trip

Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline

Oakland

Monday, April 7, 9:30 a.m. – noon

Rusty Scalf, rscalf@sonic.net

Arrowhead Marsh at the MLK Regional Shoreline is known for Clapper Rails, Soras, and Virginia Rails. The tide will be low, so we'll also look for shorebirds and ducks, as well as land birds. Maybe a rail will walk across the mudflats!

From I-880 in Oakland, exit at Hegenberger Rd. and head west. Turn right on Pardee, then left on Swan and right into park. Continue to parking lot at end of road.

American River Trail

Sacramento to Folsom

Friday – Saturday, April 11 – 12

Kathy and Blair Jarrett,
Kathy_jarrett@yahoo.com, 510.547.1233

On Friday we'll leave from Emeryville Amtrak station for Sacramento. Many birds can be seen from the train, especially through Suisun Marsh. After arriving, we'll bicycle to Folsom and stay the night. On Saturday we'll bicycle back to Sacramento and take the train home. You can also drive to Sacramento/Folsom and meet us there, or you can join us for a one-day trip on Saturday, meeting us at 8:30 a.m. at Iron Point Light Rail Station in Folsom. The 23-mile American River Trail is rich in birdlife, and the trail is fairly flat. Recent riding experience is a must to ensure the stamina necessary for such a long ride. *Trip is limited to 12 people; advance reservations are necessary.* Call or email Kathy Jarrett.

Corona Heights

San Francisco

Friday, April 18, 8 – 10 a.m.

Charles Hibbard; Lewis Ellingham; Brian Fitch; Margaret Goodale, mgoodale@randallmuseum.org, 415.554.9600 ext. 16

Meet in front of Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, at end of Museum Way



Chestnut-backed Chickadee.

Charles Denson

off Roosevelt. We will enjoy views of the city and bay as we circle Corona Heights, checking east canyon woodland and north forest for residents and migrants, as well as monitoring hilltop scrub and south cliff.

Lake Merritt and Lakeside Park

Oakland

Wednesday, April 23, 9:30 a.m. – noon

Hilary Powers, 510.834.1066,

hilary@powersedit.com; Ruth Tobey,

510.528.2093, ruthtobey@earthlink.net

Meet at large spherical cage near Nature Center at Perkins and Bellevue. We will bird around there, then go up garden path toward Children's Fairyland or walk down lake toward Embarcadero, after which we will cover what we missed. The nesting season should be going strong, and with any luck the Double-breasted Cormorants will have their crests on display. Eared Grebes should be coming into their breeding plumage. Most of the winter visitors will still be there, too.

Take 12, N, or NL bus to Grand and Perkins, and walk into park on Perkins. Best parking at boathouse lot near spherical cage. Entry (via Bellevue near Children's Fairyland) is free on weekdays.

Heron Watch at Stow Lake

Each year since 1993, Great Blue Herons have returned to Stow Lake in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park to court, mate, and raise their young. To date, 111 chicks have fledged from the colony. This year, there are at least two active nests.

For six Saturdays—starting on April 12 and ending on May 17—San Francisco Nature Education interns will be available with spotting scopes to show these magnificent birds to the public. Anyone can drop in between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. From 10:30 a.m. to noon, a naturalist will lead a nature walk around Stow Lake. Both Heron Watch activities are free and are also sponsored by Golden Gate Audubon. Follow the signs from the Stow Lake boathouse to the observation site. For more information, visit www.sfnature.org or call 415.387.9160.

Tilden Regional Park

Berkeley

Sunday, April 27, 7:30 a.m.

Oliver James, 510.524.7093,

oliverjames91@gmail.com

Meet at the Nature Area parking lot. We will search Jewel Lake and surrounding areas for returning migrants. Trip will last 2–3 hours.

Napa River Birding Cruise

Sunday, April 27, 9:45 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Dave Quady, 510.704.9353,

davequady@att.net

If you've always wanted to see and bird the Napa River, this is your opportunity. Space may still be available on the *Delphinus*, which will leave from Vallejo Marina promptly at 10 a.m. to take advantage of the low tide. The tide will be falling, and the birds should be great. Bring lunch and appropriate clothing. *Trip is limited to 30 participants.* Cost is \$80 for Golden Gate Audubon members and \$90 for non-members. Reserve by contacting Kristen Bunting at the Golden Gate Audubon office, 510.843.2222 or ggas@goldengateaudubon.org.

From East Bay, take I-80 east toward Sacramento. Cross Carquinez Bridge (\$4 toll), stay in right lanes,

exit at Sonoma Blvd., and continue in left lane until Curtola Pkwy intersection (stoplight), then jog left onto Mare Island Way. Go past Vallejo Ferry Terminal and turn left at stoplight onto Harbor Way. Turn left into first driveway and park. A crew member will meet you at gate for "K" dock. (If you reach harbormaster's office, you've gone too far.)

Mines Road

Livermore

Saturday, May 3, 8 a.m.

Dave Quady, 510.704.9353,

davequady@att.net

This all-day trip will begin in Livermore and finish there in the early evening, with opportunities to end earlier. We can expect to see Lewis's Woodpecker, Phainopepla, and Bullock's Oriole. Wild Turkey, Greater Roadrunner, and Golden Eagle are among other possibilities. Bring food and liquids. *Trip is limited to first 20 participants who sign up with leader beginning April 14.* Carpooling is encouraged to/from Livermore and is essential during the day due to limited parking along route. Leader will provide directions and carpooling information to those confirmed on trip.

Garin Regional Park

Hayward

Saturday, May 10, 8 – 11:30 a.m.

Anne Hoff, anne2210b@sbcglobal.net,

925.229.4908

We'll look for breeders in spring plumage, including Western Bluebirds, goldfinches and finches, orioles, swallows, and sparrows. There is a lot of opportunity to see raptors over the park's hillside.

Take I-880 to Hayward and exit at Tennyson Rd. (exit 26). Drive east on Tennyson to junction with Mission Blvd., turn right, and drive south about 1 mile. Turn left on Garin Ave. and follow signs to park. Meet in parking lot nearest the creek to the left after the entrance kiosk.

Santa Cruz Island Loggerhead Shrike Survey

Friday–Sunday, May 16–18

Julia Hicks, mountainquail@gmail.com;

Eli Saddler, 510.843.6551,

esaddler@goldengateaudubon.org

Join Julia Hicks, Loggerhead Shrike researcher, and Eli Saddler, Golden Gate Audubon conservation director, for a



Jim Sullivan

Courting Great Blue Herons at Stow Lake.

FIELD TRIPS continued on page 8

special trip to survey Santa Cruz Island Loggerhead Shrikes (*Lanius Ludovicianus Anthonyi*) on the Channel Islands. Participants will also get an opportunity to see the endemic Island Scrub Jay and many other birds that inhabit the Channel Islands in Southern California. This will be a rigorous trip involving strenuous hiking and trips in off-road vehicles to survey sites. Participants must be physically able to hike on steep, rocky inclines for several hours at a time. We will stay overnight at the field station facilities in shared accommodations. You can bring your own food or enjoy meals prepared together at no additional cost. Cost is \$250 for Golden Gate Audubon Supporting Members and \$270 for nonmembers. This does not cover transportation to the boat launch in Ventura. Carpooling is suggested for those driving from the Bay Area. Trip is limited to 6 people and advance reserva-

tion required with \$100 deposit and full payment by May 12. For more details, contact Eli Saddler (see page 8).

California Condors at Big Sur Saturday, May 17, noon – 4 p.m.

Richard and Linda Kincaid,
condorchick@gmail.com; for further
information: Pam Belchamber,
pbelchamber@earthlink.net,
510.549.2839

Come to Big Sur to see California Condors on this trip offered exclusively to Golden Gate Audubon Supporting Members. Leaders and participants will caravan to accessible viewing locations, using radio telemetry to locate condors in the wild. Spotting scopes are provided. A tax-deductible donation of \$50 per person to Golden Gate Audubon is required. Trip is suitable for all ages and abilities, and is limited to 16 participants. To reserve a space, contact Kristen Bunting, at ggas@

goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.2222. Payment is due to Golden Gate Audubon by Friday, May 2. Participants should bring binoculars, water, and snacks/lunch, and wear warm, layered clothing.

Meet at Big Sur Lodge. Take Hwy. 101 south to Hwy. 156 west. Connect to Hwy. 1 south and continue through Monterey/Carmel. Big Sur Lodge is 26 miles south of Carmel in Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park. Turn left into park and follow signs to lodge. Allow 3 hours of driving time (150 mi.) each way.



Wilson's Snipe.

Bob Lewis

Supporting Golden Gate Audubon Is Just a Click Away

Through new philanthropic partnerships established by Golden Gate Audubon, you can turn everyday tasks on the computer into support for our conservation, education, and birding programs. Whether you're shopping or selling online, or just searching the Internet, you can transform a click of the mouse into conservation cash.

SHOPPING

Did you know that you can shop at your favorite online stores and have a percentage of your purchases benefit Golden Gate Audubon—without costing you, or us, a penny? An online company called Maatiam works with more than 200 well-known online retailers, including Amazon, eBay, Office Depot, Target, 1-800-Flowers, Macy's, and Orbitz. Each time you shop through the Maatiam website, the company donates up to 25 percent of your purchase price directly to Golden Gate Audubon.

Just go to <http://goldengateaudubon.maatiam.com> and shop among 200 online retailers. You'll pay the same prices and get

the same great products and services—and you'll also be helping Golden Gate Audubon's efforts to protect local wildlife and habitats.

SELLING

How would you like to support the causes most important to you while giving a boost to your eBay sales? With eBay Giving Works, you can do just that. When you create a listing with eBay Giving Works, you have the opportunity to donate 10 to 100 percent of an item's sale price to Golden Gate Audubon.

The listings on eBay Giving Works tend to sell at higher final prices because buyers are more willing to purchase, and often pay more, for items that benefit a nonprofit. You can enhance your buyers' trust and loyalty by aligning with Golden Gate Audubon. Also, you'll receive a receipt for your tax-deductible donation. To use eBay Giving Works, go to the "Sell Your Item" form on eBay, select Golden Gate Audubon from the nonprofit directory, and designate your donation percentage. It's that easy!

And buyers: Check eBay for sales that benefit Golden Gate Audubon. Go to <http://givingworks.ebay.com> and make purchases that support our conservation and environmental education programs.

BROWSING

Did you know that Golden Gate Audubon can earn a penny every time you search the Internet? GoodSearch is a new Yahoo!-powered search engine that donates half its advertising revenue—about a penny per search—to the charities designated by users.

Search the Internet using GoodSearch just as you would any other search engine, get quality search results from Yahoo!, and, in so doing, support Golden Gate Audubon.

Go to www.goodsearch.com and enter Golden Gate Audubon as the charity you want to support. You can also add GoodSearch to your Internet browser's toolbar or make it your homepage so that your web browsing—and fundraising for Golden Gate Audubon—is that much easier.



February provided a brief lull in the rare bird action, with most reports consisting of continuing overwintering birds or early migrants. Nonetheless, there were a few gems.

LOONS TO DUCKS

A Laysan Albatross cruised past the SF Cliff House and Golden Gate on at least 3 occasions Feb. 8–16 (BF; LL, CL, JY). A Least Bittern was spied on Feb. 17 in the marshes at Coyote Hills, ALA (BDu), but Big Year birders were unable to repeat the feat the following day. A quartet of Tundra Swans lingered along Valley Ford Rd. near Petaluma, SON, Feb. 9–18 (LL, CL; CDL, DQ).

The Tufted Duck at L. Merritt in Oakland, ALA, continued growing a gorgeous tuft through the 29th (mob). The regular Harlequin Ducks stuck around at Heron's Head Park, SF, and Coyote Pt., SM (mob). An immature male White-winged Scoter ventured as far inland as the Huichica Cr. Unit of the NAP-SON Marshes Wildlife Area, NAP, on the 19th (MB). Long-tailed Ducks made brief appearances at L. Merritt on Feb. 2–3 (MDa; mob); at Vincent Park Marina in Richmond, CC, on the 14th (DW); and at Carquinez RS, CC, on the 20th (DW).

RAPTORS TO ALCIDS

A possible Broad-winged Hawk was observed soaring over the Gilroy Water Treatment Plant, SCL, on the 28th (JM). A light-morph juvenile Rough-legged Hawk appeared out of place at Canada Rd., Upper Crystal Springs Res., SM, on the 12th (RTh). A Crested Caracara (*Caracara plancus*) was photographed on the 14th at the elephant seal viewing area at Año Nuevo SR, SM (EdL, fide PJM), bringing the number of caracaras in CA this winter to at least 3. A female Eurasian Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) most likely the same bird banded at Hawk Hill last Oct., resurfaced at Shollenberger Marsh in Petaluma, SON, on Jan. 30 and again on Feb. 13 (CA, RW; fide RR). A single Red Phalarope made



Laysan Albatross.

Bob Lewis

landfall at Richmond Shoreline, CC, on the 16th (JRo). A couple gulls at Venice SB in Half Moon Bay, SM, on Feb. 2 showed features of a 1st-cycle and 2nd-cycle Kumlein's Iceland Gulls (*Larus glaucooides*) (RTh). The Venice Beach gull flock also hosted at least 3 Slaty-backed Gulls (*Larus schistisagus*) through the 29th, including 2 3rd-cycle and a 1st-cycle bird (RTh, DS, AJ; MDo, AW). A 1st-cycle Slaty-backed was tentatively ID'd at Sutro Baths, SF (BF), adding new support to the thesis that these birds are considered rare primarily because of the ID challenge. At least 12 Glaucous Gulls were reported around the region. An Ancient Murrelet bobbed in the waters off Bodega Head, SON, on Feb. 5 (MP).

DOVES TO THRASHERS

The redwood grove at Ryer Island, SOL, produced a Northern Saw-whet Owl on the 18th (RH, RL). A dozen Vaux's Swift joined numerous Tree Swallows over Las Gallinas Sewage Ponds, MRN, on the 3rd (RoS). In MRN, Hammond's Flycatchers remained

in Bear Valley in PRNS and at White House Pool near Inverness Park through the 19th (LH, RiS). A Cassin's Kingbird was discovered on private property at the end of Greenville Rd. in Livermore, ALA, Feb. 16–20 (AEd; mob). A couple Mountain Bluebirds continued along Buchi Station Rd, NAP, through the 7th (JL). A Townsend's Solitaire was tentatively ID'd on Alpine Rd., SCL, on the 17th (RTr). An early Swainson's Thrush was heard from a backyard in Corte Madera, MRN, on the 13th (NW).

WOOD WARBLERS TO FINCHES

Feb. warbler sightings included a Northern Waterthrush and Nashville, Yellow, Black-throated Gray, Hermit, Palm, Black-and-white, and Wilson's Warblers. A Western Tanager preceded his brethren to Flood Park at Bay Rd. in Menlo Park, SM, 17th (RF). An overwintering Clay-Colored Sparrow stuck close to a feeder in Fremont, ALA, through the 29th (CW; mob). Two Grasshopper Sparrows on the 27th were early arrivals at Pt. Pinole RS, CC (DW). At Hayward RS, ALA, on the 3rd, high tide at Cogswell Marsh flushed a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (BR). A Swamp Sparrow made a Feb. 3 appearance at the freshwater marsh at Coyote Pt. Yacht Club, SM (RTh). A Lapland Longspur remained in company with the Horned Lark flock at Hayward RS, ALA, through the 27th (mob). An Orchard Oriole maintained its winter residence at the Fort Mason Community Garden, SF, through the 16th (JC).

Semicolons separate original observer(s) from subsequent observer(s). Abbreviation "mob" = many observers; "oob" = other observers. Information is compiled from BirdBox transcripts and regional listservs; the author apologizes for any errors or omissions. Special thanks to Brent Plater for assistance in compiling data.

Abbreviations for Observers: AEd, Art Edwards; AEi, Al Eisner; AH, Alan Hopkins; AJ, Al Jaramillo; AW, Allan Wofchuck; BBo, Bill Bousman; BBr, Bob Brandriff; BDo, Bill Doyle; BDu, Bob Dunn; BF, Brian Fitch; BH, Bob Hinz; BP, Bob Power; BR, Bob Richmond, CA; Chris Adams; CC, Craig Cummings; CDL, Calvin D. Lou; CL, Cindy Lieurance; CW, Chuck Woodrum; DM, Dominik Mosur; DQ, Dave Quady; DR, Don Reinberg; DS, Dan Singer; DW, Denise Wight; EdL, Edward Lambing; EuL, Eugenia Larson; JC, Josiah Clark; JL, John Luther; JM, Jean Myers; JP, Janna Pauser; JRo, Jim Roethe; JRy, Jennifer Rycenga; JY, Jason Yakich; LB, Len Blumin; LH, Lisa Hug; LL, Les Lieurance; MB, Murray Berner; MDa, Mike Danzenbaker; MDo, Matthew Dodder; MM, Michael Mammoser; MP, Mike Parmeter; MR, Mike Rogers; NW, Nick Whelan; PD, Peggy Don; PJM, Peter J. Metropulos; PM, Peggy Macres; RF, Rich Ferrick; RH, Raye Hansen; RiS, Rich Stallcup; RL, Robin Leong; RoS, Ron Storey; RR, Ruth Rudesill; RTh, Ron Thorn; RTr, Ruth Troetschler; RW, Ron Walker; SG, Steve Glover

Abbreviations for Counties and Others: ALA, Alameda; CC, Contra Costa; CP, County Park; Cr., Creek; Cyn., Canyon; GGP, Golden Gate Park; L., Lake, MRN, Marin; Mt., Mount; N., North; NAP, Napa; NWR, National Wildlife Refuge; OSP, Open Space Preserve; PRNS, Pt Reyes National Seashore; Pt., Point; Rd., Road; Res., Reservoir; RP, Regional Park; RS, Regional Shoreline; S., South; SB, State Beach; SCL, Santa Clara; SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SOL, Solano; SON, Sonoma; SP, State Park; SR, State Reserve



CLASSES

Golden Gate Audubon is sponsoring three natural history classes beginning in April at the Albany Adult School, 601 San Gabriel Avenue, Albany. Space may still be available. Register online at <http://albany.k12.ca.us/adult/> or call 510.559.6580 for more information.

Birds & Butterflies — Easy Garden Enchantment

Corinne Greenberg

Tuesdays, April 15 – May 6, 7 – 9 p.m., plus one Saturday morning field trip, May 6

Set out a welcome for birds, butterflies, and other beneficial critters, and become captivated by the beauty of native California plants as you learn year-round ecological gardening. Gorgeous slide shows, environmental and natural history, and easy garden management lessons will help you create an enchanting wild-life habitat. Materials fee is \$5, payable to instructor. For more details, go to www.thegardenisateacher.com.

Birds of the Bay Area

Rusty Scalf and Eddie Bartley

Tuesdays, April 15 – May 13, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus field trips on the Saturday or Sunday following each class. Final trip is a weekend-long trip to the Monterey area.

It's spring! Warblers and vireos arrive, and shorebirds depart. Learn to identify our birds in their colorful breeding plumage. Join an enthusiastic group on field trips around the Bay Area. For more information, go to www.wingbeats.org.

Birding by Ear II

Denise Wight

Wednesdays, May 14 – June 4, 7 – 8:30 p.m., plus four Saturday field trips, May 17 – June 7, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Birdsongs continue into the late spring with the arrival of late migrants. Broaden your knowledge. For more information, visit the instructor's website, www.blkittiwake.com.

Summer in the Sierra Nevada

Now is the time to sign up for one of Golden Gate Audubon's exciting Birds of the Sierra classes, held in the Yuba Pass area between Sierra City and Sierraville. Both sessions include field trips to a variety of Sierran habitats to look for some of the special birds of the area, including Swainson's Hawk, White-headed and Lewis's Woodpeckers, Calliope Hummingbird, *Empidonax* flycatchers, Mountain Bluebird, Evening Grosbeak, MacGillivray's Warbler, Brewer's Sparrow, Sage Thrasher, Yellow-headed Blackbird, American Bittern, Wilson's Snipe, and Cassin's Finch.



Bob Lewis

Green-tailed Towhee.

Birds of the Sierra I, taught by Rusty Scalf and Bob Lewis, meets Thursday–Sunday, June 12–15.

Birds of the Sierra II, taught by Eddie Bartley and Bob Lewis, meets Thursday–Sunday, June 19–22.

Each class is limited to 35 people. The fee of \$80 for Golden Gate Audubon Supporting Members (\$90 for nonmembers) includes a lecture and dinner at San Francisco State University's Sierra Campus in the Yuba Pass area. Enrollees pay separately for room and other meals. The classes fill early, so call Kristen Bunting, Golden Gate Audubon office manager, at 510.843.2222 to sign up.

For those who are interested, Golden Gate Audubon has reserved the entire Sierra Valley Lodge in Calpine for these two classes. Kristen can take your reservation for a room at this centrally located lodge. Rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis.



Bob Lewis

White-headed Woodpecker.

Volunteer Opportunities with Golden Gate Audubon

Looking for more opportunities to get involved with Golden Gate Audubon? There are many ways you can help us connect with members and the local community and protect local birds and their habitats, while meeting other enthusiastic volunteers and nature lovers.

Golden Gate Audubon has a number of committees that welcome more volunteers—including the Education Committee, the East Bay Conservation Committee, and Friends of Alameda Wildlife Refuge.

We're also looking for volunteers to fill the three positions below.

If you are interested in finding out more about these volunteer positions, please contact Jennifer Robinson, Golden Gate Audubon volunteer coordinator, at jrobinson@goldengateaudubon.org or 510.843.2222.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

The editor is responsible for producing *The Gull*, which is published nine times per year. Duties include working with staff and volunteers to plan each issue; editing articles and listings to conform to house style; writing and rewriting as needed; sourcing photographs; transmitting material to and working with designer; and proof-reading each issue prior to printing. The volunteer should be an experienced editor familiar with *Chicago Manual of Style* and be capable of both working independently and collaborating with other volunteers and staff, as well as able to meet deadlines. Knowledge of local wildlife and parks, especially birds, is extremely desirable. Time commitment is approximately 20 hours per issue.

COORDINATOR FOR SPEAKER SERIES

Golden Gate Audubon's public lecture series is held monthly in Berkeley and San Francisco from September to November and January to May each year. This volunteer position presents an exciting opportunity to meet prominent naturalists, eco-travelers, photographers, ornithologists, international travelers, and other fascinating speakers and invite them to give slide-show lectures to audiences of 25 to 100 each month. Duties include working with staff and volunteers to identify potential speakers; recruiting speakers and arranging a schedule of 16 lectures each year; maintaining a speakers database; collecting and editing publicity material to advertise Speaker Series programs; coordinating speaker needs; and working with staff to host monthly Speaker Series events in one or both locations. The coordinator must be organized and capable of working independently and with other volunteers and staff. Familiarity with local scientists, naturalists, photographers, and other potential speakers is desirable. Time commitment approximately 10 to 15 hours per month. Tentative start date is June 1.

HOSPITALITY COORDINATOR FOR BERKELEY SPEAKER SERIES

The volunteer coordinator works with staff to plan and set up light refreshments at 7 p.m., prior to the start of the program at 7:30 p.m., and then helps clean up when program ends at approximately 8:30 p.m. Total commitment is approximately 5 hours per month. Berkeley programs are held at the Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, on the third Thursday of the month, from September through November and January through May.

Donations

Thank you for your generous donations to support our many conservation, education, and member activities!

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CLOROX

The Clorox Company Foundation: Eco-Oakland Education Program

the most significant northern breeding colony of Least Terns and is about 150 miles north of the nearest major nesting site. Some biologists have theorized that habitat loss elsewhere has driven the terns northward in search of suitable breeding grounds.

In the years since the Alameda Naval Air Station closed in 1997, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has managed the refuge portion of the former base for the navy. In 1996 the FWS requested 579 acres of land and 375 acres of open water to create a refuge. However, an impasse over future liability for toxins cleanup has prevented the transfer to the FWS from the navy.

Unfortunately, weeds and predators are not the only threats to the terns at Alameda Point. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has proposed a development within the boundaries of the proposed refuge designated by the FWS as the minimum habitat required to preserve the tern colony. In 2004, despite the FWS's pending request to receive the lands and create the proposed national wildlife refuge, the VA submitted a request to the navy for the terrestrial portion of the refuge. The VA has two medical facilities in Oakland, and it wants to relocate those facilities to at least 100 acres of the refuge lands. The VA development would include a mausoleum, a columbarium, and administrative buildings, as well as clinics and a private hospital. If built, this substantial development would reduce the available habitat and could jeopardize the future of the tern colony—and thus put the entire subspecies at greater risk.

The situation has now reached a critical stage. Golden Gate Audubon is alarmed that the U.S. Navy is poised to transfer the land to the VA in 2008—not only in contravention of the FWS's pending request but also without adequately assessing the environmental impacts of the VA's development within the required tern habitat. The development raises concerns about environmental cleanup,

wildlife impacts, and the practicality of building at Alameda Point, which consists of seismically unstable bay fill and does not have the infrastructure to support the planned development.

Alarmingly, the VA and the navy are proposing to complete the transfer before conducting a full Environmental Impact Statement to evaluate fully the plans for the VA facilities, as required by federal law. Golden Gate Audubon is opposing this illegal action in an effort to protect Alameda's tern colony even if the lands are not ultimately transferred to the FWS.

Golden Gate Audubon supports honoring our veterans with new and better facilities to meet their needs, but we have asked the VA and navy to find an alternate site. Since suitable locations are available outside the refuge, we are hopeful that a solution can be found that is a win for the terns and a win for our veterans. Alameda Point can be a great community resource that will serve as much-needed open space in an increasingly dense urban landscape while also preserving wildlife habitat for terns and other species.

—Eli Saddler, Conservation Director

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Though the weeding is done for this season, there are still opportunities to help protect Alameda's terns. From April through August, volunteers can participate in the Ternwatch program, which safeguards nesting terns from predation (see page 3). You can also help by coming to FAWR's monthly meetings—held every third Monday at 7 p.m.—to learn how you can join the advocacy efforts to protect the terns and this important habitat. Contact Leora Feeney, FAWR committee, at leoraalameda@att.net, or Eli Saddler, at esaddler@goldengateaudubon.org, to learn more about how you can help at this critical time.

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